

GSA Household Goods Relocation and Freight Committee Meeting  
490 L'Enfant Plaza, Suite 3208  
March 17, 2005

Meeting Facilitator – Scott Tiedt, Transportation Programs Branch, Travel and Transportation Management Division

Scott opened the meeting and welcomed the attendees. Scott mentioned that some agency representatives and TSPs were confused as to whether to attend the March 17 GSA quarterly Household Goods Relocation and Freight Committee Meeting or the March 18 semi-annual Transportation Service Provider Partnership Meeting. Scott covered the process of signing up for automatic email notifications via the GSA Transportation portal page. Scott also provided a hard copy of the email notification page and covered the four options a subscriber may select and the criteria in which they would receive automatic email notifications. Receiving an email about a particular meeting does not equate to an invitation. The Household Goods Relocation and Freight Committee Meeting is geared for Federal Agency participation and the Transportation Service Provider Partnership Meeting is geared toward Transportation Service Providers participation. Federal Civilian Agency Freight and Household Goods Committee Executive Directors may opt to attend both meetings.

Shawn Griffin, Household Goods Executive Director, was introduced and mentioned his goal is to assist agencies. If you have any concerns, you can contact Shawn at (202) 647-2919 or [griffinsr@state.gov](mailto:griffinsr@state.gov). Rocky Loewner, Freight Executive Director, was also introduced and his contact information is (202) 646-3715 or [rocky.loewner@dhs.gov](mailto:rocky.loewner@dhs.gov).

Request for Offers (RFOs) and International Program Changes – Brian Kellhofer, Kansas City Program Office

**RFOs** – The Household Goods RFOs window opened on February 14 and closes on March 31, 2005. Domestic rates filed during this supplemental window will be based on a 2 percent increase to the 415G tariff and will become effective May 1, 2005. The increase applies to line haul base rates, max-pack figures, accessorial services, water charges, and all storage related charges. The 2 percent increase also applies to all rates filed by TSPs which became effective November 1, 2004. Those TSPs who currently have rates on file can adjust their rates during the supplemental window to reflect the increase.

**International Expansion** – Effective November 1, 2005, 16 countries/points will be added to GSA's Centralized Household Goods Traffic Management Program (CHAMP) - International. GSA will send a letter to all approved international TSPs informing of the expansion and will identify the requirements for adding these countries/points to their scope of operations. The countries/points are:

|               |                 |                    |         |
|---------------|-----------------|--------------------|---------|
| Armenia       | Belarus         | Bosnia-Herzegovina | Congo   |
| Cote D'ivoire | Czech Republic* | Dali, East Timor   | Eritrea |

|            |           |           |              |
|------------|-----------|-----------|--------------|
| Georgia    | Iraq      | Jerusalem | Libya        |
| Serbia     | Slovakia* | Togo      | Turkmenistan |
| Uzbekistan |           |           |              |

*(\*reflects name change)*

China will be separated into the following rate areas: Shanghai, Beijing, Chengdu, Shenyang, Guangzhou, and China – All others.

Shipments to Iraq will be considered door-to-door but actually delivered to a military location within the Green Zone. New country codes will be programmed into TMSS. Rates will be on file for all the additional international points on November 1.

The committee had no comments on this issue.

**International Rate Tables** – The CHAMP Household Goods Tender of Service international rate tables haven't changed for several years. Some rates indicate discounts ranging from 300 to 400 percent and above. The baseline rates need aligning to reflect more realistic percentages. If agreed upon, the change would make it easier for TSPs to file rates and explain discounts. The realignment will not impact rates paid by the federal agency. This recommendation is a change to the baseline rate tables only. TSPs will be advised not to and should not use this process as a time to affect a price increase. This topic was also discussed at the TSP Partnership Meeting on March 18, 2005. **Brian will work with the Household Goods Forwarders Association of American to identify an agreeable percentage increase to the base rate tables.** Any recommended change will be coordinated with the TSPs and the federal civilian agencies.

Freight Program Request for Offers (RFOs) and Specialized Tenders Automation – Blaine Jacobs, Transportation Programs Branch

**Freight RFO** – The initial freight rate filing window opened on March 8 and closes on April 11, 2005. The newly filed rates will then be effective May 1, 2005. No changes were administered to the Standard Tender of Service baseline rate tables.

**Specialized Tenders Automation** – GSA will incorporate into the Transportation Management Service Solution (TMSS) flat bed, refrigerated van, drive away, truck away, and haul away specialized tenders by the end of summer 2005. Additional specialized equipment rates will be incorporated into TMSS at a later date. Carey Deforest from GSA's Transportation Program Management Office in Kansas City, MO, is leading this effort. He also would like to add air freight tenders and is interested in receiving input from both agency customers and TSPs. Scott asked the meeting participants to identify any additional specialized equipment rates they wanted/needed included in TMSS during this first wave. No additional requirements were mentioned. Agency customers are to contact Carey to explain any additional requirements. Currently only Freight All Kinds, closed van shipment rates reside in the TMSS system. Carey can be reached at (816) 823-3648 or [carey.deforest@gsa.gov](mailto:carey.deforest@gsa.gov).

Our objective is to convert paper tenders to e-tenders, and to comply with the Office of Governmentwide Policy mandate to have a complete electronic transportation system.

TMSS is the only electronic Bill of Lading approved for civilian agencies. Adding specialized tenders in TMSS will take time. Once we have established requirements, TMSS will be programmed to accommodate TSP's specialized tenders.

#### Customer Satisfaction Survey – Lynn Ju, Evaluation Programs Branch

The 2005 Customer Satisfaction Survey was sent out on March 16, 2005, via email. The purpose of the Customer Survey is to get feedback on the effectiveness of our programs and system, and identify areas where we need to improve. The survey will be conducted via email by the CFI Group. Your participation is very important. Anyone having questions should contact Lynn at (703) 305-7060 or [lynnette.ju@gsa.gov](mailto:lynnette.ju@gsa.gov).

#### EU Wood Packing Materials, UAB Fuel Surcharge, TMSS Complete Shipment, Other TMSS Issues – Scott Tiedt, Transportation Programs Office

**EU Enforcement of Wood Packing Materials** – Effective March 1, 2005, the European Union has banned untreated wood products from entering the EU. This may include skids, pallets or other wood packing materials. TSPs should ensure they are in compliance to prevent added expense and in the case of HHG shipments, hardship to the relocating employee. The United States is scheduled to begin enforcement against untreated wood products entering the US on September 16, 2005.

**Unaccompanied Air Baggage (UAB) Fuel Surcharge** – CHAMP currently does not permit a fuel surcharge for UAB shipments. A fuel surcharge is currently allowed for bunker fuel charges (ocean) and domestic line haul. CHAMP TSPs have approached the GSA Transportation Program Office requesting consideration for fuel surcharge provisions against UAB shipments due to increased air carrier levied fuel surcharges. Comments should be sent to Scott, Brian or Ed Hodges and a proposal(s) will be developed by Kim Chancellor (GSA Kansas City Program Office) for the next Committee Meeting. Our research will include answering how air fuel surcharges are calculated and the indices used by air carriers. Committee members should be prepared to discuss UAB fuel surcharge at the next quarterly meeting and be prepared to authorize or decline the UAB fuel surcharge proposal(s). The Department of Defense (DoD) allows a UAB fuel surcharge as a pass through charge on the billing invoice.

**Complete Shipment Module** – Programming is near completion and two system testings were performed for this module. A release date is planned for the end of April 2005. All accessorial services require an electronic handshake approval. This will streamline the pre-payment audit process. The Complete Shipments Module will require significantly increased interface with the TMSS system. Training will be provided on the Complete Shipment Module to TSPs and agencies prior to release. Check the TMSS website ([www.moveit.gsa.gov](http://www.moveit.gsa.gov)) for training dates.

#### FTR Relocation Allowances - Ed Davis, Office of Governmentwide Policy

Ed gave a summary of the proposed changes in the Relocation Allowances in the Federal Travel Regulation being reviewed by the Office of Governmentwide Policy (OGP). OGP received 28 comments covering over 100 pages from individuals, government agencies, industry, unions and one association in response to its proposed

changes in relocation allowances published in the November 24<sup>th</sup> Federal Register. The thrust behind these changes is that the government wants relocations to be completed faster and with a better reporting system.

Any recommendations may bump against proposed changes that the Governmentwide Relocation Advisory Board (GRAB) may propose. Travel allowances changes OGP is considering include:

- Increase UAB allowance up to 350 pounds
- Reduce relocation completion to 1 year plus one year extension for all PCS moves
- Mandate electronic relocation payment system effective September 2005
- PCS mileage rate will not change. It will never equate to the business POV rate
- House hunting trips will probably remain 10 days
- POV value versus shipping cost – value of vehicle must exceed shipping cost – this may not be doable
- Wanted to link storage to temporary quarters allowance; will keep initial storage period to 90 days and will not link the two

Note: These allowance changes discussed by Ed at this meeting are not finalized and may change.

Changes will not be sent to Congress. OGP hopes to publish a final rule in September 2005. Ed's contact information is (202) 208-7638 or ed.davis@gsa.gov.

#### Household Goods Tariff Adjustment – Brian Kellhofer, Kansas City Program Office

**Item 40** – The Household Goods Carriers' Bureau Committee (HGCBC) has a docket proposal pending to establish Item 40, a gross product adjustment (GPA) in the Tariff 415-G. This item would provide a mechanism for an annual general adjustment in rates based on two government indices. A poll was taken with 15 "no" and 0 "yes" votes for the automatic increase. The committee requested GSA to get additional information from industry explaining the methodology and reason behind the request. The committee wanted to know the potential impact the adjustment would have on packing and accessorial. The group questioned why HGCBC would seek an increase rather than have the TSP adjust their discounts. Industry will be required to explain why an automatic increase is warranted when discounts are already on average above 50 percent. Brian will report industry's response to these questions when the committee convenes in May. Kim Chancellor (GSA Kansas City) will also compile the history of previous increases.

#### GRAB – Scott Tiedt, Transportation Programs Office

Governmentwide Relocation Advisory Board's (GRAB's) mission is to improve upon the current federal government relocations processes. The GRAB board is comprised of 11 voting members. Tauna Delmonico is a voting board member and is on one of the 5 sub-committees. Scott Tiedt serves on a separate sub-committee. GSA's Transportation Programs Office facilitated a GRAB Focus Group at the Philadelphia Transportation Forum on February 24, 2005. The discussion held at this meeting was an extension of the Philadelphia Focus Group. Scott provided meeting participants a

copy of all the comments received at the Philadelphia Forum Focus Group. The next GRAB board meetings are March 23<sup>rd</sup> and May 25<sup>th</sup> and are open to the general public. Customer agency representatives are highly encouraged to attend to better understand the direction the government may take regarding relocations. The location is at the Omni Shoreham Hotel, 2500 Calvert Street, NW, Washington, DC (202) 234-0700.

### **Questions:**

Question: Which procurement method do the agencies prefer Tender or FAR?

Response: Agencies prefer the flexibility of both options to achieve best performance.

Question: What are agencies' feelings on using 3<sup>rd</sup> party services?

Response: Agencies provided differing opinions. One agency prefers 3<sup>rd</sup> party services since they have a small staff and also believes 3<sup>rd</sup> party costs are lower than CHAMP taking into consideration all cost factors. Another agency disagreed. Brian mentioned the option for agencies to use Move Management Services (MMS) under CHAMP. CHAMP RFO solicits the TSP industry for General (G) and MMS (M) rates. The "G" and "M" rates can easily be distinguished within the TMSS system on the Household Goods Query Results screen. Regardless of whether MMS is procured via CHAMP or via a 3<sup>rd</sup> party provider, a Memorandum of Understanding or some other form of agreement will need to be established between the agency customer and the provider to make certain both parties are in agreement and understand what is expected by the other party. The conclusion was that 3<sup>rd</sup> party providers play a vital role and meet the needs of some agencies while other agencies have elected to retain a direct relationship with CHAMP and the TSP (carrier) industry.

Question: Is the format of the Federal Travel Regulation (Q & A format) good?

Response: Some agencies like it but not all topics are covered as compared to the old format. There was no clear agreement or disagreement; however, it is believed that with the Q&A format some finer details are lost in the translation. At this point-in-time, it is not likely OGP will revert back to the old format.

Question: Who elected voting members of GRAB?

Response: GSA's Office of Governmentwide Policy

Scott will take comments back to his GRAB sub-committee.

### **Additional Topics**

**Use of Social Security Numbers on transportation documentation** – Luis Roque (Department of State) questioned if the social security number is required on transportation documents. Per OGP, it is only required for US Customs inbound shipments. A suggestion was to use the passport number instead. The social security number is currently optional in TMSS and on the 3080. GSA will research this issue with customs.

The next meeting (subject to change) is tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, May 17, 2005.

Meeting participants:

| <b>Number</b> | <b><u>Name</u></b> | <b><u>Organization</u></b>                         |
|---------------|--------------------|--|
| 1             | Randy Correa       | Department of Justice                              |
| 2             | Gene Mixon         | Department of Justice                              |
| 3             | Pierre Lundy       | Department of Justice                              |
| 4             | Luis Roque         | Department of State                                |
| 5             | Shawn Griffin      | Department of State                                |
| 6             | Gerand Maradino    | Department of State                                |
| 7             | Dave Anders        | Department of State                                |
| 8             | Bill Fouts         | DHS Customs and Border Protection                  |
| 9             | Ric Miner          | DHS Customs and Border Protection                  |
| 10            | Wanda Montgomery   | Drug Enforcement Agency                            |
| 11            | Ivan Thomas        | Federal Aviation Administration                    |
| 12            | Brenda Thompson    | Federal Aviation Administration                    |
| 13            | Connie Lindsay     | Federal Aviation Administration                    |
| 14            | Rocky Loewner      | Federal Emergency Management Agency                |
| 15            | Percy Smith        | Government Printing Office                         |
| 16            | Lynn Ju            | GSA  |
| 17            | Raymond Price      | GSA  |
| 18            | Robert Watkins     | GSA  |
| 19            | Noreen Bania       | GSA  |
| 20            | Angela Jones       | GSA  |
| 21            | Mathis Gardner     | GSA  |
| 22            | John Wheeler       | GSA  |
| 23            | Brian Kellhofer    | GSA  |
| 24            | Ed Hodges          | GSA  |
| 25            | Mary Anne Sykes    | GSA  |
| 26            | Tauna Delmonico    | GSA  |
| 27            | Scott Tiedt        | GSA  |
| 28            | Ed Davis           | GSA - OGP  |
| 29            | Elizabeth Allison  | GSA - OGP  |
| 30            | Pat Estep          | International Broadcasting Bureau                  |
| 31            | Willie Gookin      | National Aeronautics and Space Administration      |
| 32            | Evelyn Reneer      | Surface Deployment and Distribution Command (SDDC) |
| 33            | Ruth Tetreault     | Surface Deployment and Distribution Command (SDDC) |
| 34            | Darrell Washington | US Geological Survey                               |
| 35            | Gracie Turner      | US Secret Service                                  |
| 36            | Amanda Chapman     | US Secret Service                                  |